

TO: Under and Assistant Secretaries                      DRAFT 1/23/03  
Agency Heads

FROM: Scott Charbo  
Chief Information Officer

SUBJECT: Annual Information Cyber Security Plans

This memorandum initiates the annual call for the USDA 2003 Annual Security Plans for Information Technology (IT) Systems. Information security has escalated as the subject of high-level attention from both the press and media. Recent terrorist attacks have only highlighted the need to ensure that we have the highest level of information security practices. IT Security Plans have become the foundation document in the overall security process because they define the system security features and controls. They support Capital Planning and Investment Control (CPIC), Federal Information Security Management Act (FISMA) reporting, System Life Cycle efforts, Risk Management activities as well as the Certification and Accreditation of Information Technology (IT) systems. Therefore, it is critical that they be prepared/updated on a regular basis with the most current information concerning each agency's information security practices. All plans and supporting material prepared for this request are due to my office no later than **April 30, 2003**.

The Agency Head or Administrator must submit a cover letter in which you will be attesting to the completeness and accuracy of the security plan submissions. This memo will also include information on whether the material weaknesses identified in the 2001 Annual Security Plan review have been corrected or if there is an Action Plan and Milestones in the FISMA, Plan of Action and Milestone Report. This step provides each of you an opportunity to be aware of security plan content and to facilitate your responses to the FISMA accountability requirements.

Agency CIOs have been provided detail instructions regarding the preparation and deadline for the receipt of new plans. Cyber Security will again engage in a vigorous review of these plans and dialog with your respective agencies/staff offices. The purpose of this review and dialog is to ensure that all plans conform to the requirements outlined in Federal and departmental policy. A formal analysis will be provided to each agency and staff office of 2003 Security Plan Review results.

These plans will also be used as a basis for security recommendations under the CPIC process to the Executive Information Technology Investment Review Board (EITIRB) who approves funding. Recommendations from my office could include holding the investment in its current phase, unfavorable security comments or loss of funding. We appreciate the your support in this important project.